

## ABSTRACT

The present invention relate to idle control in an internal combustion engine and particularly to the control of the air supply to the engine during engine idling. An engine control unit (ECU) monitors the operation of ancillary consumer units to calculate an engine demand depending at least partly on the operation of these units. The ECU also monitors the engine idling speed to determine if the expected engine demand can be met at this engine idling speed. When the engine demand exceeds that available at the idling speed, the ECU determines a desired degree of opening of an air inlet valve to meet the expected engine demand. The ECU is arranged first to open the air inlet valve to a position at which the steady state airflow would exceed that necessary to meet the expected engine demand, and then closes the air inlet valve towards the calculated desired opening.